

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

IN RE: PROJECT NO. 12668610
EDISON 61463

I-81 CORRIDOR STUDY PUBLIC MEETING

FEBRUARY 6, 2020

Northeast State Community College

Basler Library, Room L106

APPEARING FOR TDOT: TROY EBBERT

JEANNE STEVENS

1 MR. EBBERT: For of those of you -- I
2 think I know every single person in this room, but my
3 name is Troy Ebbert, I work for TDOT. I now know
4 Ronda. This is a different Ronda. Ronda Blakley is
5 up here, she's our court reporter for this evening.
6 I wanted to make sure to point her out. We have WSP
7 staff that's with us today. This is Ms. Stevens with
8 us. Of course, you know, she's the boss. She's
9 running everything. You don't like it, she can fix
10 it. Excuse me.

11 MS. STEVENS: I can't fix it, but you can
12 complain to me.

13 MR. EBBERT: You can complain to Steve,
14 too. It's okay. But we have several staff here. We
15 have some public. Everyone else in here either works
16 for TDOT or is an NPO professional. We have one guy
17 from Virginia here.

18 MS. STEVENS: Did you say there was a
19 member of the public here?

20 MR. EBBERT: I'm looking. Yeah, there's
21 one or two.

22 MS. STEVENS: There's one who doesn't work
23 for a public agency? Okay.

24 MR. EBBERT: Wyatt's here. My son is
25 here.

1 MS. STEVENS: He's smart. He's skipping
2 the presentation.

3 MR. EBBERT: This part, he's like that's
4 enough. I appreciate you all being here, of course.
5 You know, it's been a pow wow with everybody here.
6 We have folks here from STID as well. If you don't
7 know STID, that's Steve Allen's group. Everybody
8 knows that that means. So if you have something else
9 you want to talk about, right here they are. Michael
10 Gilbert is here with us, and it's really cool to have
11 STID here as well.

12 MS. STEVENS: Yes, it is.

13 MR. EBBERT: Because they are the next --
14 and feel free to jump in here -- they're the next
15 step. You know, we have STID -- or, we have Long-
16 Range Planning that comes through, and then it starts
17 through their process when they develop the plan and
18 put a price tag on it. So that's how it starts
19 working. So we like to work hand in hand with them.
20 By the time it gets to these guys over here with
21 construction and down in the districts, it's way past
22 us. It goes to Andy -- you can just slide it right
23 down the table, there. That's perfect. If it ends
24 up being built, you guys have to take care of it.

25 But I do thank you all for being here. We

1 have cards outside. Take of couple of these with
2 you. Feel free to take them and pass them out. I
3 can get you a few more. The OCT staff, which is
4 Ronda, myself, and Michelle, we are available to come
5 and do presentations. If someone finds that hey, we
6 have questions about that, they call Bill and say
7 what's going on with this, are they going to buy my
8 house or something we're looking at the Interstate,
9 are they going to do anything with the school,
10 something like that -- have them call me, have them
11 call Ronda, and then we can go give a presentation to
12 their civic group, anything like that. Sunday school
13 class, I don't care, take your pick. We'll come talk
14 to them and give them this information. It will be
15 the same thing you see here. The NPO's, you're going
16 to see this again at your next meeting. RPO, first
17 on the agenda, you know. You're going to get tired
18 of this, but you'll get it -- we're pushing this
19 information out because we need to get this
20 information to people so we can get the feedback.
21 There's a mapping component with this one?

22 MS. STEVENS: Not anymore. Not that I
23 know of.

24 MR. EBBERT: Okay. But the information
25 is on here for you all to give the feedback to what's

1 going on. Anyone who came not from Bristol, but from
2 the south area, you came up, you saw that nice big
3 truck climbing lane, that turned into a slip lane, it
4 brought you right into this exit. That was as a
5 result of the last planning meeting.

6 MS. STEVENS: Hey, I was going to say
7 that.

8 MR. EBBERT: Sorry. Stealing some
9 thunder. Those are the type of projects we're
10 looking for, and everyone in this room will raise
11 their hand if I were to ask do we need to fix the 81-
12 26 interchange. Yeah. Everyone's hand --

13 MS. STEVENS: What's wrong with it?

14 MR. EBBERT: We just studied 26. That
15 was a hot topic. We're studying 81 right now, and
16 the portion in purple kind of over here, that was 75
17 that overlaps with 40, is being studied on this one.
18 So we'll do another -- there's another meeting like
19 this coming up in Knoxville. It's going to be very
20 similar to this one, and we are going to be
21 concentrating on that area at that point. So please
22 make sure everybody signed in when you came in, get
23 these cards, if you have any questions, there are
24 comment sheets out there as well, and if you have any
25 questions, feel free to ask questions, and we'll get

1 going.

2 MS. STEVENS: All right. Thanks, Troy.
3 I'm glad you're feeling better.

4 MR. EBBERT: Yes, thank you.

5 MS. STEVENS: Troy has been under the
6 weather. Well, I'm really happy I went to the
7 Kingsport NPO meeting this afternoon, because I got
8 to meet so many of you already. So, thank you for
9 coming back. Didn't scare you off yet. This is the
10 first public meeting of round one for this project,
11 so you guys are first in line. You get to hear it
12 while it's fresh. As Troy said, you're very familiar
13 with this process already, I suspect, because you
14 probably participated in the I-26 study. And yes,
15 we're aware that I-81/I-26 interchange has some
16 attention, and actually, since we were at the
17 Kingsport NPO meeting today, we got a copy of what
18 Kingsport's going to submit for comments. So we've
19 already got a head start. Ready to go.

20 What we wanted to talk to you about tonight
21 is, quickly, what is the study for, what are the
22 major elements of it, what's the time line for it,
23 talk a little bit about what we've seen so far from
24 the analysis of data in terms of current conditions,
25 and then open it up for discussion so that we can

1 hear what your perspectives are as users, and in your
2 case -- for many of your cases as managers and
3 operators of this system. We'll have maps around the
4 room, here, for you to be able to come up and talk to
5 us in more detail. We've got post-it notes that
6 we'll scribble things on while we talk, so I won't
7 keep very long here for the slides to make sure that
8 we have some time for you to do that.

9 As I think some of you have already heart
10 us talk about, the study itself is a twenty-year set
11 of recommended improvements for both I-40 and I-81
12 across the whole state. Although it's twenty year,
13 it is phased so that it will come -- it will have
14 some short-term steps that we can take. It's not
15 something that we can't even tackle for the next
16 fifteen years. And the purpose of it is three-fold.
17 One is to provide guidance, as it says here, for
18 decision-makers regarding future projects, the idea
19 being that part of planning is recognizing we can't
20 afford everything all at once, so we plan ahead, and
21 if we do it well, then all of you folks who have
22 participated in the study have already kind of agreed
23 and we have consensus on what the needs are, and we
24 have general buy-in, so then when the money is
25 available, TDOT has that pool of available candidates

1 that it can just go ahead and start programming
2 things because they know there's already consensus
3 that the community's looking for. So when funding
4 does become available, that pool is ready. Second
5 is, as I said, making sure that we're not just
6 focusing on huge capital projects that will take ten
7 or fifteen years to get to. We're looking at near-
8 term steps. And then finally, promoting that
9 coordination with all of you who either live near the
10 corridor, work near the corridor, and/or use the
11 corridor every day.

12 This is Tennessee's longest interstate
13 corridor, especially when you add I-40 and I-81
14 together, spanning the State more than five hundred
15 miles. So that's a little bit of a difference from
16 the study that some of you may have participated in
17 before. You can see the number of counties that it
18 covers just looking at what it runs directly through,
19 and of course, as we know, the area of influence is
20 quite a bit larger. There also, you can see that we
21 have quite a bit of bi-state coordination needed with
22 Virginia, North Carolina, and Arkansas and
23 Mississippi, as we'll talk about in a minute.

24 These are the major elements of the study
25 and the general time frame. You see, if you can read

1 those little bitty numbers, we're expecting to wrap
2 up this fall, but we are here. We have been
3 collecting data and updating part of the State's
4 travel demand model, which will help us project
5 traffic trends for 2040. We kind of know what
6 traffic's doing right now, and I've got a slide on
7 that, but what we're constructing now will give us a
8 chance to, hopefully, more accurately project future
9 traffic. So while we've been doing that, we've also
10 begun to talk to stakeholders, partly because the I-
11 75 study was already going on and we do have that
12 overlapping section in Knoxville where 40 and 75 run
13 concurrently. So we kind of kick-started that even
14 before these public meetings started. But we are in
15 open house round one. There will be a second round
16 when we've got a draft study report ready for review,
17 and we hope we'll see all of you there at that point.

18 So let's go now, bit by bit, four different
19 sections -- major sections of what this study covers.
20 Here's what we're going to talk about tonight, which
21 is what we're seeing in terms of existing and future
22 conditions. One of the current deficiencies, based
23 on data that we've got available for safety, for
24 congestion, how are things operating, what are we
25 expecting by 2040, and then what are some of the

1 opportunities, and this might get more to what are
2 some of the economic development trends. Is there a
3 large area of industrial land that is, perhaps, being
4 purchased that we need to look at interchange access
5 for, either upgraded or new? Get a sense of what's
6 happening. Second would be to begin, once we had
7 that list of deficiencies or opportunities
8 identified, is start looking at -- what are the
9 different multi-modal investments that the State and
10 its partners can make to address those things? And
11 these are the categories that TDOT has asked us to
12 sort of sort the solutions to. There's putting -- I
13 think our minds all go to, first, which is highway
14 expansion or highway improvement, but there's also
15 what we're now calling TSMO -- that's our jargon --
16 Transportation Systems Management and Operations.
17 Some of you also know it as ITS or Smartway, and
18 that's a very cost effective way to find ways to get
19 more out of your road without actually widening it.
20 Obviously, we're going to look at safety, we're
21 looking at freight and goods movement because this is
22 such a really important corridor for the economy of
23 Tennessee, and actually the Southeast. And then
24 finally, looking to some extent at transit and travel
25 to man management, and I'll talk more about that in a

1 couple of minutes.

2 Once we develop sort of a candidate list of
3 potential solutions in all of those categories, we'll
4 start evaluating them, sorting them, and figuring out
5 phasing. What we'll do to accomplish that is take
6 the goals and objectives of the study, which we're
7 developing with an advisory committee, kind of define
8 the performance measures. How are we going to know
9 if we succeeded? What goals are we setting for
10 ourselves? And things that are, hopefully,
11 quantifiable. And then we'll apply those to the
12 different project candidates that are available to
13 try to sort out what's going to give TDOT and all of
14 us the biggest bang for the buck.

15 Then with that prioritized list, or that
16 phased list of recommendations -- some of it might be
17 projects, some of it might be program investment,
18 like help service patrols, or ITS operations --
19 somebody has to sit at that traffic management
20 center, that costs money. So the final report will
21 have a set of recommendations that cover both of
22 those categories.

23 So the boards that you see around the room,
24 and the set of slides I'm going to run through
25 quickly, reflect what we see so far from data on

1 current conditions. We're going to talk a little bit
2 about what projects and studies are already under
3 way, give you a glimpse into what we're seeing about
4 traffic flow, and obviously we want to hear from you,
5 too. Talk about what might be emerging in terms of
6 safety, what's going on with operations and
7 management of the corridor, a little bit about
8 freight, and then also touch on transit. As Troy
9 mentioned, there are projects that were recommended
10 in a previous study. That study was completed about
11 ten years ago, and I think all of you know TDOT has
12 been regularly doing interstate corridor studies for
13 each interstate around Tennessee, and then updating
14 them on a regular cycle. This one is ten years old,
15 that's why it's being updated now. But I think it's
16 really important to recognize that planning is not a
17 one-time thing. We're updating a previous plan. So
18 let's celebrate what got built, especially given that
19 it got built without Improve Act funding. I'm
20 impressed that anything got built, sort of.

21 So, some of what has happened is -- what
22 you see in orange, there was a truck climbing lane
23 built in Sullivan County --

24
25 [OFF RECORD]

1 MS. STEVENS: The other project that some
2 of you might remember is the I-40/81 interchange,
3 especially being right near that rest area. The
4 ramps were lengthened in that area some time back. I
5 feel like it was more than ten years ago, but that
6 was an outcome of that last study.

7 All right. Things that are under way, or
8 under development, and some of these include not just
9 TDOT projects, but we thought it was worth showing
10 some of the local projects -- regional projects --
11 that are going on, even though they're not on the
12 interstate itself, they're on routes that are
13 impacting traffic on the interstate. So for example
14 -- let me look at my cheat sheet here -- so, for
15 example, we'll talk in a minute about the fact that
16 the Smart Way system is being expanded to span from
17 I-26 up to the Virginia state line. Out in the
18 Morristown area, Highway 11E is being widened on the
19 east side of downtown Morristown, and that's
20 important because it's an important parallel route
21 for the interstate. Other examples would be in
22 Kingsport, Fort Henry Boulevard widening, since that
23 is an interchange with 81, but it's on our radar. So
24 we want to acknowledge that a lot of stuff is
25 happening as a result of the Improve Act.

1 There are also other planning activities
2 going on besides this study that are much more
3 location-specific. I guess I might call them spot
4 studies. Most of them currently are being led by
5 TDOT, and they're happening at interchanges
6 throughout Region 1, where -- particularly ramp-
7 queuing, where traffic is starting to back up on the
8 ramps. STID, in particular, takes a look at what
9 might be able to be done operationally in order to
10 improve safety there. There are also a couple of
11 locations in the Knoxville Downtown area that are
12 being looked at for operational improvements. Those
13 things are shown in yellow with the little diamonds,
14 like Lucky Charms. And then the things that are in
15 green are things that are not under development, but
16 they are proposed in regional long-range
17 transportation plans. And do you notice something?
18 Do you notice there's no green in your area? Do you
19 know why? I had all the green, and then when I put
20 on top of it all the stuff that got funded through
21 the Improve Act, you got your stuff. It's underway.
22 Now how long it will take to finish, I don't know,
23 but it's underway. So that's really good news.

24 All right. Let's talk a little bit about
25 traffic flow. We have a lot better data for traffic

1 analysis than we used to. We now have stuff that we
2 can collect that gets collected from your cell phone,
3 from the GPS that's in your car, probably things we
4 don't even know about. Your Apple Watch --
5 something's watching you, and we're getting all the
6 data. Actually, TDOT is getting the data. The feds
7 have made this database available, and since we're
8 working for TDOT, we had access to it. What this is,
9 is one year's worth of travel data from everybody for
10 2018, and then we sorted it out to show how many so-
11 called "excess hours" are being traveled. And
12 without getting into too much detail on how that's
13 calculated, what I will say is what you're seeing is
14 areas where it takes a lot more time to travel than
15 you would expect under non-congested conditions. So
16 that would be what we would call recurring
17 congestion, for you nerds. So you see that a lot of
18 it's happening in Knoxville. That's no big surprise
19 to all of us, but you will also see, just like you
20 guys have been saying, the I-26/I-81 interchange, you
21 are seeing some areas of slow-down, and I'm guessing
22 -- I look forward to hearing from you, but I'm
23 guessing some of that might be because of the
24 weaving, trying to get on, find your ramp. Just
25 because all of it shows up green here doesn't mean

1 there isn't congestion, and the data doesn't capture
2 everything, we know that. So one of the things we
3 want to hear from you tonight is what are you
4 experiencing? What's not showing up here? So, I'm
5 looking forward to that discussion. But what we
6 would be doing is using that plus your input tonight
7 to pinpoint specific locations where we'll get a more
8 detailed analysis and start generating those multi-
9 modal solutions that I talked about.

10 Okay, in terms of safety, we're not
11 drilling down really deep, here. Our job with a
12 500+-mile corridor is really to do more of a high-
13 level identification of hot spots, so we're looking
14 at areas where it looks like there might need to be,
15 based on the number of crashes, the crash rate, a
16 little bit more investigation by TDOT, should they
17 choose. So again, this is a high-level screening,
18 but we will be looking in particular at crashes that
19 involve trucks, things that are median crossovers,
20 and things that are roadway departure, partly because
21 those are the ones that tend to be fatal, and that's
22 what we're trying to do is save lives. But also
23 because those are typically the ones that most impact
24 the interstate and cause closures and cause delay,
25 which in turn is a huge economic impact to all of us.

1 I mentioned a minute ago that we are
2 beginning to shift toward not just adding highway
3 capacity, but also looking at other ways to get more
4 out of our roads. TDOT has done an awful lot in the
5 last ten to fifteen years at improving and enhancing
6 operations and management of all the highways, and
7 especially the interstates. When we first started
8 talking to stakeholders a month or two ago, we heard
9 nothing but praise from UT Knoxville as far as
10 working with Region 1 on special event planning, like
11 for UT football games. So, sometimes it's not -- it
12 doesn't have to be that high-tech, it's just
13 conversations happening and people agreeing to
14 operate certain ways. Many of you might be familiar
15 with the help trucks that serve motorists that have
16 issues in the Knoxville area, and then the Smart Way
17 system, which would include the message boards, real-
18 time traffic monitoring, in some cases video cameras.
19 What all of that does is let TDOT, as many of you
20 know, better monitor what's happening on the
21 interstate so that when incidents do occur, they can
22 be identified quicker and responded to quicker. And
23 then that extra element is already having a plan
24 mapped out about what you're going to do when you do
25 need to respond. And I think some of you know that

1 each TDOT region office has a book that shows every
2 milepost on the interstate. If the wreck happens
3 between this exit and this exit, here's the map of
4 the detour route, here's who needs to be notified, if
5 we need detour markers, here's where they go. That's
6 half the battle, is knowing exactly what you want to
7 do, because there's not time to stop and figure it
8 out when you're responding. So that's just
9 tremendous. And the fact that you didn't have a huge
10 amount of red or orange doesn't mean you don't
11 experience congestion, but what it might mean is that
12 a lot of the congestion you experience is related to
13 incidents. So having better incident response is key
14 to keeping traffic flowing. Try to recover quickly
15 when stuff does happen.

16 And the other thing that we want to
17 recognize that's important to highway operations, but
18 isn't a major, major capital project compared to
19 interchange construction, for instance, would be for
20 truck climbing lanes. And I mentioned earlier that
21 there was one completed as a result of the last
22 study.

23 So I showed what equipment is currently out
24 there, and I didn't read the legend but I expect you
25 all can see that what we did was map where TDOT's

1 current message board signs are, where are the
2 traffic cameras, where the weather monitoring
3 stations -- Bill, you were mentioning this morning
4 the importance of having those weather monitoring
5 stations. What this slide shows is Smart Way
6 expansion that's underway or under development. Two
7 of these are TDOT projects. I already mentioned the
8 one that will cover I-81 up to the Virginia state
9 line. Then there's another one that will cover from
10 Straw Plains -- no -- yes -- from Straw Plains to
11 Exit 407 -- good call. And then there's a non-TDOT
12 project which is covering -- Sevier County is
13 sponsoring that, and that's going to be along State
14 Highway 66. That'll be timing and upgrades. I'm
15 looking because there's one here that actually also
16 goes under Cocke County, but I don't have it on my
17 slide text, sorry. I'll fix that.

18 Okay. In terms of freight, if you think
19 about the connections that this corridor makes, I-81
20 goes all the way up the Eastern United States up to
21 the Northeast, and actually to Canada. So if you
22 think about the importance of that route to trade,
23 very, very significant. A bunch of states actually,
24 as you all know, have banded together to create the
25 I-81 Coalition so that they can coordinate their

1 investments and pay attention to what each other are
2 doing and operate in a unified fashion. And then I-
3 40, of course, is connecting almost all of the state
4 east-west, and as you guys know, goes way out all the
5 way to California. So economically, these are a huge
6 lifeline for us, and I know when you look at
7 Tennessee's employment base, so much of our economy
8 is based on transportation sector jobs. So having
9 good interstates is key for us.

10 In terms of transit service, for a 500-mile
11 corridor, really, the high level approach that's
12 dictated here is to kind of look at where is there
13 urban transit service. And you see here, we've
14 mapped out where it exists. This is not bad,
15 actually, given that we don't have high densities in
16 a lot of places in Tennessee. This shows where
17 there's currently fixed-route transit service. The
18 other thing that we'll need to look at is inter-city
19 transit, because at the state-wide corridor study
20 level, that's really what we're looking at, is how
21 you currently get from Bristol to Nashville. Can you
22 hop Greyhound? How are the connections? Are they
23 frequent enough? What else can be done? Is there a
24 role for private providers, like Megabus, to come
25 supplement that? So those are the kinds of issues

1 that we're expecting to discuss. And then I think
2 many of you are aware that in addition to the fixed-
3 route service, there are ride-share programs.
4 Actually, UT operates one that covers the entire
5 state, where if you want to get matched up with
6 somebody for van pooling, they'll facilitate that.
7 They'll even help you get a van. And then, also,
8 there are rural services, actually, I heard about in
9 Kingsport today --

10
11 [OFF RECORD]

12
13 MS. STEVENS: All right, so that you can
14 get your books checked out quickly, let's go ahead
15 and take a last slide, and just point out, and Troy
16 already handed out or talked about the baseball
17 cards. But TDOT has created a Survey Monkey survey,
18 and this is the link to it. We encourage you to take
19 it. It also will link up to the website, and as the
20 study progresses, different documents and
21 presentations like this one will be posted on the
22 website, so we more than welcome you to do that. If
23 you choose to leave your email address with us at the
24 sign-in sheet, we will put you on a list to receive
25 updates, e-newsletters, things like that, so you know

1 when you need to go to look at the website, you're
2 not just constantly checking it for new material. As
3 I mentioned, this is round one. We'll be coming back
4 for round two as we have that draft study report
5 ready for you to review. But please encourage
6 people, if any of you do social media, maybe forward
7 this link, because what we're finding is people won't
8 go type in the link, but if somebody forwards it to
9 them and it's hot -- a hot link, and all they have to
10 do is click, it's amazing how many survey responses
11 we can get. So tell your friends.

12 All right. Before we move on to letting
13 you circulate and talk about the boards with us, are
14 there are any general comments about the study or
15 some of the things I've just said?

16
17 [QUESTION AND ANSWER]

18
19 Q. Jeanne, I don't know whether you know
20 or not, but TDOT is actually moving forward with a
21 lot of improvements on I-81.

22 A. That's great to hear.

23 Q. And Blake, he may have some more
24 details on it, but it looks like the whole corridor
25 is being looked at, so that's good.

1 A. That is. That's really good. Yeah,
2 Blake and Rex actually were showing me kind of the
3 executive summary, I think, and project list, and we
4 were hearing -- but actually, there were a whole lot
5 more projects they were wishing would have gone on
6 that list. But yeah, absolutely, as you were just
7 pointing out, the interstate coordination is key.
8 Same thing with North Carolina. And I didn't mention
9 it, but the section of 40 that goes between the 81
10 junction and North Carolina was not part of the study
11 ten years ago, so we're making sure to include it
12 this time.

13 Q. With the rock slides that occurred on
14 40 going into North Carolina, I noticed on the
15 congestion map earlier it showed green throughout all
16 of it. A little curious, but is detour routes
17 something that's being looked at throughout this
18 study? Because those seem to happen frequently
19 nowadays.

20 A. Yes. I think that's an excellent
21 point. That was one reason that I was thrilled when
22 I understood that the region offices had gotten so
23 formalized with those incident management plans. One
24 of the things we've done that we didn't show on a
25 map, but we have actually mapped NGIS, all of the

1 detour routes that TDOT identified in each of those
2 regional plans, and then because of their great
3 trends, roadway information database, we'll be able
4 to evaluate those detour routes and maybe flag ones
5 that have pinch points. I know in some areas of
6 Tennessee that we've looked at, there are -- when
7 rock fall happens, there are eighteen-wheelers being
8 directed through towns that are a thousand people and
9 the road has no shoulder -- you know, it's not a good
10 situation, and I expect there are some similar things
11 here.

12 Q. The reason I mentioned that, when we
13 looked at 81, one of the things we looked at were how
14 our detour routes -- a specific look, and a separate
15 book of funding was put forward for that to update
16 those facilities, interconnect their signals, and to
17 do a little bit more within that. That way, if we do
18 have an incident on the interstate, we can get people
19 off of it in a more timely manner. So that's one
20 thing that we found in our study that ought to really
21 be looked at.

22 A. Was there a particular funding source?
23 That seems like it might be a safety --

24 Q. The 81 funding.

25 A. Oh, that's right.

1 MALE VOICE: We're also looking at our
2 detour routes signal time, and how they can change
3 the signal timing.

4 Q. And that's throughout the entire
5 corridor. So for Route 11, that runs through the
6 entire district, we're looking to be able -- even
7 within localities that control their own signals --
8 we will be able to control all of the signals.

9 A. So if they're not adaptive currently,
10 the I-81 funding is paying for the interconnects?
11 Nice. Did you all hear that?

12 Q. Has TDOT considered that type of
13 funding, from county to city [inaudible]? In
14 Virginia, special tax or something on the 81 corridor
15 to pay for those improvements.

16 A. What's taxed? The businesses?

17 MR. EBBERT: What they've done is they've
18 gone through and they've added a gas tax on all these
19 counties on 81 in Virginia.

20 A. Oh.

21 MR. EBBERT: Is that right?

22 Q. They do the PDC's. So, in Tennessee,
23 we use the PDC's, so you will have a few that did not
24 touch the corridor. There was a gas tax increase
25 within those PDC's for funds to go toward the

1 funding.

2 A. Did that go to an election? On a
3 ballot?

4 MR. EBBERT: The Commonwealth. It was --
5 you went through the Legislature and it went to the
6 Governor's desk.

7 A. Because I could see if it was close to
8 the interstate, the places where people are
9 purchasing fuel, it would include a lot of through
10 travelers. But if it's the whole county, that gets a
11 lot more people.

12 Q. User tax.

13 A. Yeah. That's very interesting.

14 Q. Really good.

15 A. That's great. Any other thoughts like
16 that, or things to share from other studies? Well
17 Troy mentioned putting in that comment, and I guess I
18 want to take the opportunity before we turn it loose
19 for general discussion and wandering around, that
20 there is a court reporter here tonight. Thank you,
21 Ronda, very much. And her purpose in being here is
22 if you would like to make a public comment for the
23 record, you can come over and give her your name.
24 She's got a seat for you, and you can spew forth your
25 opinions and your suggestions and your complaints,

1 and she'll write them all down and then we'll have a
2 typed-up transcript of them. So I want to invite you
3 to do that. Any other questions?

4 MS. HARTZ: Jeanne, I just want to let
5 everybody know, when you do exit, we're now going to
6 exit out of this door. So I'm pretty sure an alarm
7 won't go off, but we are just going to take our
8 chances and go with what the leadership here has told
9 us to do.

10 A. Great.

11 MS. HARTZ: Exit out of that door.

12 A. Any other logistical questions?

13 MR. EBBERT: So you all are -- have you
14 already had the other meetings across the state? I
15 know Knoxville is coming up.

16 A. No, we're the first -- you all are the
17 first ones tonight. The next meeting in this part of
18 the state will be in Knoxville, and it will be
19 February 20th at the Cedar Bluff Library. And that
20 will be on that website link I showed you, and that's
21 probably on baseball cards, if you've taken them.
22 The full list of meeting locations will be posted on
23 the website.

24 MR. EBBERT: And is that kind of the
25 route you are following, going east to west, pretty

1 much?

2 A. No, we're going where people will have
3 us and we can get a room. That's kind of how it's
4 gone so far.

5 MS. HARTZ: That was the intent, but of
6 course we're at the beckon call of --

7 A. Actually, this one is a little
8 unusual. Is there anybody here from the General
9 Assembly tonight? I was curious, because we're
10 actually -- part of our scheduling has been that
11 we're only doing these meetings on Thursdays right
12 now because the Legislature's in session and we
13 wanted to be sure that our Representatives and
14 Senators had the chance to come.

15 Q. We got an RCP from Timothy Hill about
16 this, he regretted that he could not attend, but he's
17 aware that you all are here.

18 A. Thank you. I appreciate that. Troy
19 and his folks will be more than happy to do follow-up
20 briefings. We'll give them all these materials, so
21 those will be available. Wonderful. Same thing with
22 your elected officials. Particularly at this stage
23 of the study, this is where we get to have the most
24 input, so yeah. Getting the word out now rather than
25 later is great. Well, I want to invite everybody to

1 wander around. Most of these boards represent what
2 you already saw on the slides, so the purpose would
3 be just to get a good look at it if I already took
4 the slide of the screen and you didn't see all of it.
5 Or, like I said, we've got post-it notes so we can
6 make some detailed notes. If you say hey, it's
7 actually this mile marker where people keep sliding
8 off the road, we'd like to know that. Thank you.
9 Thank you very much for coming tonight.

10
11 [OFF RECORD]

12
13 MR. BEAVERS: It's Tim Beavers. T-I-M, B-
14 E-A-V-E-R-S. I'm the Director of Development
15 Services for the City of Bristol, Tennessee. Just a
16 few comments. One, great program. Glad the
17 corridors are being looked at and studied by TDOT and
18 updating the studies. But our interest in Bristol is
19 the Exit 74 interchange, and looking on the ramps --
20 off ramps, on ramps -- at that interchange onto 11W,
21 and that being -- that interchange, when it was
22 developed, was developed as a rural interchange, and
23 now with the commercial development in the area, The
24 Pinnacle, and just growth of population in Bristol,
25 that has become more of an urban interchange, so

1 there's weaving patterns on and off the Exit 74 that
2 we would hope would be looked at as part of this
3 study. And the interaction of Exit 74 with The
4 Pinnacle development and how that impacts each other,
5 the traffic flows, especially if one of the casinos
6 goes in in Southwest Virginia. One in The Pinnacle,
7 if it is the one that is selected, obviously, will
8 add an increased traffic count on 11W and that
9 interchange. But that would be it. And always would
10 like to put a plug in for that if they could look at
11 passenger rail service, if that is even a possibility
12 to be included in this study, about potentially
13 improving passenger rail service from Bristol down
14 through Chattanooga, or to Nashville, could help with
15 decreasing traffic flow on the corridor. That's it.

1 CERTIFICATE

2 I, RONDA BLAKLEY, LCR # 430, Licensed
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